

Communicating to high school leaders, teachers, parents and students what students must know and be able to do to be prepared for college and a good job and developing a system for using available data to inform students and parents about their level of preparedness —

Actions Montana can take:

- ☐ Have secondary, postsecondary and business leaders agree upon a set of standards that represents English, reading and mathematics readiness for college and careers.
● ● ● ● ● ● (12 pts)
- ☐ Conduct research to determine if high school teacher assignments, student work and classroom assessments in English/reading, mathematics and science classes are aligned to college- and career readiness standards.
● ● ● ● ● (8 pts)
- ☐ Have secondary and postsecondary leaders work together to determine whether a single exam could suffice as a test for high school graduation and for readiness for postsecondary studies.
● ● (3 pts)
- ☐ Implement a single system for educational data that links all education data systems from pre-kindergarten through higher education.
● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● (21 pts)
- ☐ Hold college presidents accountable for the pre-service preparation of well-qualified middle grades and high school teachers skilled at standards-based instruction and leaders skilled at providing leadership for continuous improvement of curricula and instruction.
● (3 pts)
- ☐ Provide professional development to build the capacity of high school principals, academic teachers and career/technical teachers for aligning assignments and classroom assessments to college and career-readiness standards and on using authentic, real-world assignments that engage and motivate students to master course standards.
● ● ● ● ● (7 pts)
- ☐ Assist school leadership teams with the professional development required to transform existing school cultures into high-performing ones.
● ● (4 pts)

Improving academic preparedness and closing the gaps between performance and standards for all groups of students

Actions Montana can take:

- ☐ **Require essential core courses for all high school students.**
● ● ● ● ● ● ● (18 pts)
- ☐ **Require all students take additional academic courses or a series of courses in a career field.**
● (2 pts)
- ☐ **Set targets for increasing student participation and performance in AP courses and exams for all groups of students.**
● ● (5 pts)
- ☐ **Use the senior year to give students a jump-start on college, a prepared- start for college and a prepared-start for work.**
● ● (5 pts)
- ☐ **Insist that schools offer a senior year transitional English/reading course for students unprepared for college-level English, reading and language arts.**
● ● ● ● (6 pts)
- ☐ **Insist that schools offer a senior year transitional mathematics course for students unprepared for college-level mathematics.**
● ● ● (5 pts)
- ☐ **Train middle grades teachers and leaders to prepare students for high school college-preparatory courses and provide assistance.**
● (2 pts)
- ☐ **Ensure that eighth-grade students have access to Algebra I, that the standards for these courses are high, and that pre-algebra and Algebra I courses are taught by teachers possessing content knowledge and skills in using proven teaching methods.**
● ● ● ● ● ● ● (12 pts)
- ☐ **Hold high schools accountable for providing challenging learning experiences for all groups of students in academic and career/technical studies with appropriate support that results in all groups making a similar amount of progress each year toward accountability goals.**
● ● (4 pts)
- ☐ **Hold school boards and districts accountable for developing and implementing a strategic comprehensive school improvement plan in low-performing high schools to improve college and career transitions.**
● ● ● ● ● (11 pts)

- First Choice
- Second Choice
- Third Choice







Expanding students' access to and increasing participation in high-quality career/technical programs of study that are aligned to industry and college-readiness standards and lead to a postsecondary credential.

Actions Montana can take:

- ☐ Expand students' access to high-quality career/technical programs that are aligned to both industry and college-readiness standards.
● ● ● ● ● ● ● (18 pts)
- ☐ Establish panels composed of community college faculty, high school teachers and school leaders, and industry representatives for each of the career clusters.
● ● (5 pts)
- ☐ Train career/technical teachers on research-based instructional methods.
● (1 pts)
- ☐ Create a repository of tested instructional units that integrate academic content and real-world projects in career/technical studies.
● ● (4 pts)
- ☐ Train counselors to address the impact of workplace changes on the courses and curricula students need to be prepared for postsecondary studies and careers in a given field.
● ● ● (6 pts)
- ☐ Encourage community colleges to develop high school to college transition programs with a special emphasis on career pathways important to the state's economic and workforce development.
● ● ● ● ● ● ● (13 pts)
- ☐ Encourage smaller high schools to focus on career pathways with a broader scope such as communications or information technology.
● ● (4 pts)
- ☐ Adopt an overarching dual enrollment policy statewide, establishing methods for developing, implementing and monitoring dual enrollment in Montana's postsecondary institutions.
● ● ● ● ● ● ● (14 pts)
- ☐ Require an assessment of high school students' college-readiness in English, reading and mathematics prior to enrollment in articulated and dual enrollment technical courses.
● ● (4 pts)









Increasing the state's complement of students, teachers and workers highly skilled in mathematics and science

Actions Montana can take:

- ☐ Implement a statewide mathematics initiative to increase the pool of highly qualified mathematics teachers.
 (24 pts)
- ☐ Set annual goals to increase the percentages of eighth-graders who complete Algebra I while in the middle grades.
 (14 pts)
- ☐ Set progressive annual targets for increasing the percentage of high school students who complete a series of courses in mathematics and science.
 (14 pts)
- ☐ Insist that schools offer a senior year transitional mathematics course for students unprepared for college-level mathematics.
 (1 pt)
- ☐ Create programs of study that combine four years of mathematics and science.
 (9 pts)
- ☐ Support a mathematics coach in every school district.
 (4 pts)






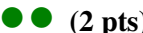

Increasing enrollment, persistence and completion rates at the community colleges and four-year colleges and universities

Actions Montana can take:

- ☐ Develop a systemic approach to improving college persistence and graduation rates in the public community colleges, colleges of technology and universities.
 (21 pts)
- ☐ Hold community colleges, colleges of technology and universities accountable for increased persistence and completion.
 (12 pts)
- ☐ Set state targets for reducing annually the percentages of recent high school graduates entering college requiring remedial studies in mathematics and reading/language arts, and make these a part of the accountability systems for high schools, community colleges, colleges of technology and universities.
 (13 pts)
- ☐ Improve the quality of remedial courses.
 (5 pts)
- ☐ Develop actions to reduce the failure rate in high-attrition courses at postsecondary institutions.
 (7 pts)
- ☐ Incorporate employer certification exams.
- ☐ Create a repository of best practices evolving from the various state initiatives to improve persistence and completion and make it available in print and/or electronic form.
 (4 pts)
- ☐ Increase resources to expand access to high-demand postsecondary programs of study tied to the state's economic development.
 (7 pts)
- ☐ Develop more partnership programs with employers to provide opportunities for internships and mentors.
 (11 pts)

Increasing the high school graduation rate while improving achievement

Actions Montana can take:

- ☐ Set reasonable — but ambitious — annual targets toward meeting the 100 percent graduation goal and provide incentives to schools for meeting them.
 (21 pts)
- ☐ Ensure the state's accountability system gives equal emphasis to improving achievement and high school completion rates.
 (11 pts)
- ☐ Focus attention on getting more students ready for entering ninth grade.
 (16 pts)
- ☐ Require schools to implement a catch-up system for improving the promotion rate from ninth to 10th grade.
 (5 pts)
- ☐ Support a literacy coach in every school district with a low-performing middle grades school or high school who will work with all teachers on reading and writing strategies.
 (4 pts)
- ☐ Focus on reducing high school retention rates at each grade level while helping students meet grade level standards.
 (2 pts)
- ☐ Require high schools failing to get 70 percent of entering ninth-grade students to the senior year within three years and their feeder middle grades schools to adopt a proven comprehensive school reform model.
 (7 pts)

Designing and implementing a guidance and counseling system built on high expectations for all students

Actions Montana can take:

- ☐ Undertake aggressive steps to educate students, parents, teachers and the community about the need for further education beyond high school for all groups of students and the degree of effort required to attain this education.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● (21 pts)

- ☐ Implement a teacher adviser system where each professional educator in the high school assists a small group of students and their parents from grade nine through grade 12 to set postsecondary goals.

● ● ● ● ● ● (13 pts)

- ☐ Integrate assignments into the middle grades and/or ninth-grade curricula that help students develop good habits of success.

● ● ● ● ● (6 pts)

- ☐ Provide opportunities in the middle grades and ninth-grade curricula for all students to explore a wide range of career and educational options to assist them by the end of grade nine to formulate at least a six-year career and educational plan.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● (17 pts)

- ☐ Provide middle grades and high school counselors with tools to more efficiently and effectively monitor and advise their students.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● (15 pts)